



Fundarte honors icons of Aruban culture for their fifth anniversary

Fort Zoutman in Oranjestad was the venue for an delightful evening of all the cultural arts on Friday, December 8, during a celebration of the fifth anniversary of Fundarte, (Fundacion Arubano di Arte.) “Un Anochi Literario,” Papiamento for “A Literary Night,” entertained and enlightened a gathering that filled the courtyard of the fort. The evening also honored three of the great names in Aruban culture, Senora Nydia Ecury, Senor Alcides “Chido” Quilotte, and posthumously, Senora Burny Every.

Music, dancing, poetry, comedy, drama, and prose were all featured during a program showcasing some of Aruba’s finest performing artists and literary figures. Yubi Naar, also a well known figure as a journalist and actor was Master of Ceremonies for a bill that touched on every form of the cultural excellence that Arubans have produced, and this is prodigious.

Musical performers included Maybelline Arends-Croes and her group, Edgar Kelkboom & Doodle Sophia, and both singing and comedy from noted actress Fariah Luidens. Diana Antonette and her daughter Alydia Wever performed both dance and poetry. Ruthy “Lady Ruth” Vrieswijk recited poetry in dedication to both Nydia Ecury and Alcides Quilotte, honoring them for their great contributions to the literary body of work in Papiamento.

Nydia Ecury is an icon in the annals of Aruban literature. Playwright, author, poetess, and director, she has translated many classical plays into Papiamento and staged them over the years. She has lived in Curacao since 1957, but traveled to Aruba to attend the “Anochi Literario,” and also to regal the audience with a reading of her work.

A particularly touching moment for the entire gathering was when Fundarte President Leo Tromp awarded a trophy to Alcides “Chido” Quilotte, and this beloved actor, director and a senior member of Mascaruba, the national theater company, received a standing ovation. A photo presentation flashed on the wall chronicled highlights of his career and the many contributions of this man who also translated many great plays to Papiamento.

Family members accepted the honor for Burny Every, the first professional woman director in Aruba, who taught theater at the Colegio Arubano and the I.P.A., Instituto Pedologico Arubano, the teacher training school. She was also an actress in many of her productions, and directed the film “Dera Gai.”

It was truly a moving evening of great literature, music, and dance, honoring three of the greats starts in the constellation of Aruban culture. Organizers of the evening expressed gratitude to the sponsors of this evening of culture offered free to the public, which were the RBTT Bank, Aruba Bank, Lotto pa Deporte and the Talk of the Town Resort. Those that participated volunteered their time enthusiastically and with great admiration for the honorees.